BIBLIOTHECA REGIA MONACENSIS

WILLIAM the Third, by the Grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland,

Defender of the Faith, &c. TO ALL and Singular Archbishops, Bishops, Archdeacons, Deans, and their Officials, Parsons, Vicars, Curates, and all other Spiritual Persons: And also to all Justices of the Peace, Mayors, Sheriffs, Bayliffs, Constables, Churchwardens, Chappelwardens, Headboroughs, Collectors for the Poor, and their Overseers: And also to all Officers of Cities, Boroughs, and Towns Corporate: And to all other our Officers, Ministers and Subjects whatsoever they be, as well within Liberties as without, to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting.

WHEREAS It hath been humbly Represented unto Us by the Petition of William Ebourne, John Ebourne, William Marshall, Thomas Huggins, and Marmaduke Roberts, and above One Hundred others Sufferers by Fire, in the Parish of Saint Mary Magdalen Bermondsey, in the County of Surry: And also by a Certificate made at the General Quarter-Sessions of the Peace, held by Adjournment for the said County, on Thursday the Twentieth day of July last, under the Hands of our Trusty and Well-beloved Sir Peter Daniel, Knight, Anthony Bowyer, Samuel Lewin, Samuel Atkinson, Thomas Lant, Charles Cox, James Isaacson, and Richard Marsh, Esquires, Justices of the Peace for Our said County: THAT on the Fourteenth day of June last, there happened near the River of Thames, in the said Parish of Saint Mary Magdalen Bermondsey, where the Petitioners were Inhabitants, a most Dreadful and Sudden Fire, which in the space of a few Hours consumed and burnt down to the Ground the Dwelling-houses of the said poor Petitioners, (the said Dwelling-houses being in Number One Hundred and Sixteen) And also the Warehouses, Sheds, Stables, Out-houses, Wharfs, and other Buildings: And also burnt several Ships and Vessels laying on the Shoar, and some in Yards: Together with the Houshold-Goods and other Goods, Chattels, and Implements of Trade belonging to the said poor Sufferers: The Loss sustained thereby amounting to above Twenty three Thousand and Seventy nine Pounds, Three Shillings, and Sixpence, as appeared to Our said Justices upon a serious and strict Examination by them taken in open Court, upon the Oaths of the said poor Sufferers, as also upon the Oaths of several experienced and able Workmen, and of several other honest and substantial Householders within the said Parish, who viewed and made an Estimate thereof. By which said Dismal Calamity, the said poor Sufferers and their Families (who by their great Industry in Trade and Commerce, had acquired considerable Stocks, and were always forward in relieving others) are now become destitute of all Support and Livelihood, and no ways able to sustain themselves, but must fall into great Want and Penury, Unless timely relieved by the Charitable Aid of our Loving Subjects.

AND Have therefore humbly besought Us to grant unto them Our gracious License and Protection under Our Great Seal of England, to Authorize and Enable them to Ask and Receive the Charitable Contributions and Benevolence of all Our Loving Subjects within Our Kingdom of England, Dominion of Wales, and Town of Berwick upon Tweed: Unto which their humble Request, We have condescended, and do by these Presents in a peculiar manner Recommend their deplorable Condition to the tender Regard and Charitable Consideration of all Our Loving Subjects, not doubting but that they will extend their Bowels of Compassion to their said poor Suffering Brethren for their Relief and Support upon this sad Occasion.

KNOW YE THEREFORE, That of Our Royal Favour and Princely Compassion, We have given and granted, and by these Our Letters Patents under Our Great Seal of England, do give and grant unto the said poor Sufferers the Inhabitants of the said Parish of Saint Mary Magdalen Bermondsey, and to their Deputy and Deputies, the Bearer and Bearers hereof (Authorized and Deputed in that Behalf, as in these Presents is Appointed) full Power, License, and Authority, to ask, gather, receive, and take the Alms and Charitable Benevolence of all Our Loving Subjects, not only Householders, Masters and Mistresses, but also Lodgers, Servants, Strangers and others in all and every the Counties, Cities, Cinque-Ports, Towns-Corporate, Universities, Boroughs, Privileged Places, Parishes, Chappelries, Towns, Villages, Hamlets, and all other Places whatsoever, within Our Kingdom of England, Dominion of Wales, and Town of Berwick upon Tweed, towards the Support and Relief of the said poor distressed Sufferers.

WHEREFORE We Require and Command You and every of You, That at such Time and Times as the Deputy and Deputies, the Bearer and Bearers hereof, shall come and repair to any of Your Churches, Chappels, or Assemblies for Religious Worship, to ask and receive the Alms and Charitable Benevolence of Our said Loving Subjects, That Ye quietly permit and suffer them so to do, without any manner of Your Letts or Contradictions. And You the said Parsons, Vicars, Ministers, and Curates, upon the next Lord's Day after these our Letters Patents, or Duplicates, or True Copies thereof shall be produced or tendred unto You, or to the Churchwardens, or Chappelwardens respectively, shall deliberately and affectionately publish and declare the Tenour of the same unto Our said Loving Subjects, and by the most prevailing Arguments, Excite, Perswade, and Stir them up to extend their liberal Contributions towards their said Great Losses.

AND to the Intent all Our Loving Subjects of Ability, of what Perswasion soever may not exempt themselves from contributing hereunto, We do hereby charge and command the Preachers and Ministers of all Congregations and Assemblies for Religious Worship, That they and every of them do publish these Presents, and effectually exhort their respective Congregations to manifest their Charity upon this Occasion.

AND YOU the said Churchwardens, Chappelwardens, Collectors for the Poor, and their Overseers, together with the Minister where it conveniently may be, are hereby required to go from House to House upon the Week-days next following the Publication hereof, to Collect the Alms of Our said Loving Subjects. And the Sum and Sums collected by Virtue hereof to indorse upon these Our Letters Patents, or the said Copies, in Words at length and not in Figures only; together with the Names of the Counties, Cities, Towns, Parishes, Chappelries, and Places where the same was collected, and the Time and Times when collected; Which Indorsments are to be subscribed by the Ministers and Your selves, and also to be entred into your Books of Accompt for the said Parishes, Chappelries, and Places respectively. And You are also to deliver all the said Monies with all the said Copies unto the said Bearer and Bearers hereof, Authorized as herein is appointed, whensoever You shall be by them or any of them thereunto required, but to no other Person or Persons whatsoever whose receiving thereof together with their or any of their Acquittance or Acquittances shall be your sufficient Discharge for so doing. Which said Bearer and Bearers are hereby willed and required upon Receipt of the said Monys, to pay the same into the Chamber of Our City of London, within Thirty Days next after receipt thereof, From whence the same is to be issued, disposed of, and distributed to and amongst the said poor Sufferers, for their Support and towards rebuilding the said Houses and Buildings, and repairing such as were spoiled by the said Fire in such manner AS Our Right Trusty and Well-beloved Sir Richard Levett, Knight, Lord-Mayor of Our City of London, and the Lord-Mayor for such the time then being, Our Trusty and Well-beloved Sir Francis Child, Knight, Alderman of Our City of London, Sir Thomas Cuddon, Knight, Chamberlain of Our said City of London, and the Chamberlain of Our said City for such the Time being, Samuel Lewin Esquire, Samuel Atkinson Esquire, Charles Cox Esquire, and John Cholmeley Esquire, or any Five or more of them, shall from Time to Time under their respective Hands and Seals, direct and appoint. Which said Persons, We do hereby constitute and appoint, Commissioners and Trustees of the said Charity, with full Power to them or any Five or more of them, to appoint Collectors, under their respective Hands and Seals, and to see the Monys applied and distributed as aforesaid amongst the said poor Sufferers, in such proportion and with such regard to their Losses and Conditions, as to them shall seem Just and Equal; and to no other Use, Intent, or Purpose whatsoever, Care being already taken by Our said Justices of the Peace in their said Session, that Bond is taken of the said Sufferers with Sureties which remain amongst the Records of the Sessions of Peace for Our said County of Surry; That the said Sufferers nor any of them shall at any time convert, implop, or bestow any of the said Monys to the Benefit and Advantage of any Landlord or other Person whatsoever, but that the same shall be imploped and bestowed in re-edifying, re-building, and repairing the said Houses and Premises, consumed by the said Fire.

AND LASTLY, Our Will and Pleasure is, That no Person or Persons whatsoever, shall collect or receive the said Monies of or from the said Church-wardens, Chappelwardens, Collectors for the Poor, and their Overseers, or any other but such only as shall be thereunto appointed and authorized by Deputation, under the Hands and Seals of the above-named Commissioners and Trustees, or any Five or more of them. IN WITNESS whereof, We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patents, and to continue for One whole Year from Michaelmas next, and no longer. WITNESS Our Self at Westminster, the Eight and Twentieth day of May, in the Twelfth Year of Our Reign.

Fall ℔ Pearson.

God save the King.

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